**on the basis of words: volume one**

# FAMILIARITY PHENOMENON: AUTONORMIA

familiarity is unquestioned

*from "auto," self and "norm," usual practice*

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**Abstract:** In daily life, we often navigate through familiar objects, words, and routines without much thought. This familiarity creates a sense of comfort, making these elements so ingrained in our consciousness that we rarely stop to question or examine them. This isn't just about routine; it's about the cognitive filters we develop that cause us to overlook the deeper meanings, origins, or implications of what we take for granted. Only in moments of sudden realization do we break through these mental barriers and rediscover the layers of meaning behind what we once overlooked.

A multi-volume collection, each volume focuses on a single word, offering new definitions, clarifications, or translations. Each term is explored in depth, revealing its origins, nuances, and the underlying phenomena that shape its meaning.

Related: cognitive habituation, semantic satiation, inattentional blindness, conceptual inertia

## The Nature of Autonormia

Autonormia (noun): The cognitive state in which elements of familiarity and routine have always been self-contained (or self-defined) or have become so ingrained that they are accepted, unexamined, unnoticed, often masking deeper meanings, traumas, or origins until a moment of realization brings them to conscious awareness.

Derived from the Greek words "auto" (self) and "norm" (standard or usual practice), it describes how our brains create shortcuts to handle familiar information. While these shortcuts are efficient, they lead to a narrowed perspective where original contexts, deeper meanings, or alternative interpretations are ignored. For example, many people understand the term "alphabet" as a self defined concept without considering its roots in the Greek letters Alpha and Beta, even with studying Greek. The familiarity of the term creates a cognitive norm, making it self-contained and limiting deeper exploration.

This might lead to cognitive inertia, defined as the difficulty in altering established patterns of thinking or beliefs. However, autonormia, the process of establishing these patterns, does not necessarily result in resistance; instead, it can foster acceptance and potentially enhance cognitive functions by prompting the examination of other familiar aspects of one's life.

## Breaking Through Autonormia

Moments of sudden realization, or epiphanies, occur when the cognitive veil of Autonormia is lifted. These moments can be triggered by new information, a change in perspective, or simple introspection. When this happens, familiar elements are re-examined, and their deeper meanings or origins come into conscious awareness. For instance, realizing that "alphabet" is derived from Alpha and Beta may prompt a reconsideration of other self-contained concepts.

Autonormia is not merely a passive state but an active cognitive process where the mind selectively filters out information that doesn't fit within the established norm. While this filtering is useful for efficiency, it also prevents growth and understanding by trapping individuals in a loop of cognitive unawareness.

## Autonormia in Broader Contexts

Autonormia can be observed in various aspects of life beyond linguistics. Cultural practices often become so ingrained that their original significance is forgotten. A holiday tradition may be celebrated year after year without participants fully understanding its historical or cultural origins. Similarly, personal beliefs formed in childhood may persist into adulthood without being questioned, even in the face of new evidence or experiences.

Understanding Autonormia has significant implications for both personal and societal growth. On a personal level, recognizing this cognitive state can lead to greater self-awareness and a willingness to question long-held beliefs or practices. On a societal level, challenging Autonormia can drive cultural evolution, encouraging communities to revisit and re-evaluate traditions, norms, and values.

Breaking free from autonormalities requires conscious effort and often a deliberate shift in perspective. It involves questioning the familiar, seeking out new information, and being open to reinterpreting what has long been taken for granted. By doing so, individuals can uncover deeper meanings, reconnect with the origins of their beliefs or practices, and foster a more nuanced understanding of the world.

**Conclusion:** autonormia is a cognitive state that allows us to navigate the familiar with ease but limits our understanding by masking deeper meanings and origins. By recognizing and challenging this state, we can break free from cognitive unawareness, leading to personal growth and a richer, more informed perspective on the world.

## Parts of Grammar:

**Adjective: Autonormic**
Definition: Describing something that is so familiar and routine that it is accepted without question, often leading to a lack of deeper inquiry or understanding.
Example: "The autonormic nature of his daily commute meant he never noticed the historical landmarks along the way."

**Verb: Autonormalize**
Definition: The process of becoming so familiar and routine that something is accepted without question, losing its original context or significance.
Example: "Over time, she autonormalized the symbols on her keyboard, forgetting their etymological roots."

**Adjective (alternate): Autonormal, Autonormally, Autonormalities**
Definition: Pertaining to or characterized by autonormia; something that has become normalized through familiarity.
Example: "The autonormal behavior in the office masked the underlying issues that went unnoticed for years."

**Noun (person): Autonormist**
Definition: A person who accepts or promotes the acceptance of familiar routines or concepts without questioning them.
Example: "As an autonormist, he rarely questioned the traditional methods used in his industry."

### *This cognitive phenomenon is related to several other concepts:*

**Cognitive Habituation:** Repeated exposure to a stimulus reduces sensitivity and awareness over time. Autonormia extends this concept to entire ideas or practices, which become normalized and unexamined.
**Semantic Satiation:** The temporary loss of meaning of a word after it is repeated multiple times in rapid succession. While semantic satiation occurs over a short period, Autonormia develops over longer periods, creating a more permanent cognitive state.
**Inattentional Blindness:** The failure to notice a fully visible but unexpected object or event when attention is focused elsewhere. Autonormia shares this trait of selective attention but applies it to cognitive processes rather than sensory perception.

**on the basis of words: volume one, part two**

# FAMILIARITY PHENOMENON: AUTONORMIA EXTENSION

familiarity is unquestioned

*from "auto," self and "norm," usual practice*

Andrew Lehti

*September the Ninth 2024*

**Autonormia (noun):** *A cognitive state where elements of familiarity and routine are so ingrained that they remain unexamined and unnoticed, often masking deeper meanings, traumas, or origins until a moment of realization brings them to conscious awareness.* Many words and phrases are self-defined or self-contained. Take the word "meanwhile" for instance. If you are unaware of the strict definition, you may understand "meanwhile" solely as its own entity, and while this is not wholly the effect of Autonormia, it is a starting point.

Reflect on what "meanwhile" means without referencing a dictionary for a few moments before moving onto the next page. Although looking it up is possible, doing so would defeat the purpose of this exercise. This paper shall act as an extension to the first paper of the same name.

**Claim***:* I posit that ***"I Believe in Angels"*** isn't a celebration of faith—but rather a clever satire aimed at religion, specifically Christianity.

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 *10.6084/m9.figshare.26826499.v3*

**Self-Containment**
It took several seconds for myself to define "meanwhile" because it is so ingrained in the mind as itself. The definition was approached through synonyms:

**"mean" → defined → middle**
**"while" → occurring**

This led to a broken definition of "in the middle of this occurring," eventually refining to "concurrently occurring." Oxford defines it as "in the intervening period of time." While this definition is more nuanced and accurate than "concurrently occurring," it accounts for the fact that "meanwhile" can apply to the present, past, or future. A more precise definition might be "intervening concurrently in the same period of time."

**Autonormia as a Cognitive Filter**
All cognitive filters have downsides. Autonormia, in particular, manages the overwhelming information encountered daily by allowing autopilot operation in familiar, routine experiences. However, this state also means underlying issues or dangers often go unnoticed because they have become so familiar and ingrained in perception. If a threat emerges unrecognized due to its familiarity, or if it reappears after being repressed, it slips back into the autonormic state—present but unexamined. The mind, seeking comfort in the familiar, blends repression with automatic acceptance of these norms, making it easy to overlook even serious dangers. It is the precursor to:

> *It's impossible: conventionally.*

**Explanations of Autonormia**
Autonormia can be likened to the brain's RAM, where familiar routines and norms are stored for quick, automatic access, enabling navigation of daily life without overwhelming cognitive resources. Just as RAM helps process familiar tasks efficiently, freeing up the brain's critical thinking functions for more complex tasks, autonormia masks underlying issues or prevents recognition of certain dangers because familiar patterns are not subject to the same scrutiny as new or unfamiliar information handled by critical thought processes.

When constructing the morphologicon, the template was loaded into memory, but the first row in the CSV was loaded incorrectly, corrupting around 3.9 million English morphologics. The CPU processed the data as correct, similar to how offensive terms might be used without realizing their offensiveness to others.

Consider eggcorns, such as when people mistakenly believe the phrase "all intents and purposes" is actually "all intensive purposes" due to misinterpretation or mishearing. This is a prime example of autonormia's failure, where something incorrect is absorbed and accepted without critical examination. Despite the phrase's nonsensical nature, it

becomes ingrained and used automatically because it was stored in memory without being questioned due to repeated exposure.

Autonormia manifests in language, especially in English with its complex morphology. English has a rich array of functional suffixes and prefixes, particularly derivational ones, which can be combined in ways that easily lead to confusion or misinterpretation—especially for non-native speakers.

**Examples of non-standard English combinable affixation:**
*Antidisestablishmentarianism* = anti- dis- **establish** -ment -ar -ian -ism

However, the definition is tainted as it currently only pertains to the opposition of removing the Church of England's authority. This should be redefined to properly align with our **linguistic standards**: "*the stance against removing a formally established system, organization, or authority from its position.*"

***However, those are far and few between****, we can look at simple prefixes which are common in spoken English and not written:*

Mis- Re-: Incorrectly doing again, e.g., "remisinterpret" (misinterpreting something again).
Anti- Pro-: Against those who are in favor, e.g., "anti-protest" (against pro-activists).

The prefix "re-" is common in everyday speech, though less frequently written. Words like "re-unlock," "re-disconnect," "re-prepare," or "re-rewind" are spoken but require context for clarity, and would hardly ever be written down. An English speaker would typically understand the intent, such as when someone says "re-unlock" after locking a door again following another reentry. "Re-rewind" refers to rewinding something twice, where the need to rewind again arises after missing something the first time. It isn't necessarily redundant but rather building onto the context.

Most people internalize these linguistic patterns without formal instruction. They do not consciously learn all the suffixes or prefixes through explicit teaching; instead, they absorb them naturally while acquiring the language. This automatic absorption means native speakers might use these elements correctly without ever considering the rules behind them. However, when teaching English to foreigners, these subtleties are often overlooked, leading to errors or "broken" English, where the nuances of these morphological combinations are missed.

Consider "regard," "regardless," and "irregardless." In English, the prefix "ir-" typically negates the word it attaches to, just as "less" does in "regardless." By logic, "irregardless" should cancel itself out and mean "regard," or perhaps "being mindful of." However, through autonormia, many English speakers use "irregardless" as synonymous with "regardless," despite the double negative. This usage became so ingrained and accepted in everyday speech that it took a long time for the collective consciousness to

recognize the error. Still, through linguistic evolution, we now accept 'irregardless' as an irregular form of regardless. Which is how language should and does evolve. We have a lot of irregular deviations of grammar in every language.

Tens of thousands of combinable suffixes could be generated that English speakers may not fully be able to strictly define when asked but native speakers often recognize a word and intuitively understand its meaning without knowing the exact definition. This process is more intuitive than autonormic, as the information is processed subconsciously through countless interactions with words that share similar suffixes.

Examples include:

**-mentable** (from -ment-able): Argumentable: Capable of being argued or debated.
**-mental** (from -ment-al): Environmental: Relating to or concerning the environment.
**-mentalism** (from -ment-al-ism): Fundamentalism: A belief in the strict, literal interpretation of scripture or basic principles.
**-mentalist** (from -ment-al-ist): Experimentalist: A person who engages in or advocates for experimental methods.
**-mentalistic** (from -ment-al-ist-ic): Experimentalistic: Relating to or characterized by experimental methods.
**-mentalistically** (from -ment-al-ist-ic-al-ly): Experimentalistically: In a manner that is characteristic of or related to experimental methods.
**-mentality** (from -ment-al-ity): Instrumentality: The quality of serving as an instrument or means to an end.
**-mentalize** (from -ment-al-ize): Sentimentalize: To treat or regard something in an excessively emotional way.
**-mentalizer** (from -ment-al-ize-er): Sentimentalizer: A person who excessively emotionalizes or sentimentalizes situations or concepts.
**-mentalizing** (from -ment-al-ize-ing): Sentimentalizing: The act of treating something with excessive emotion or sentiment.
**-mentally** (from -ment-al-ly): Fundamentally: In a basic or foundational way.
**-mentalness** (from -ment-al-ness): Sentimentalness: The quality of being overly emotional or sentimental.

**Expansion of Autonormia**

The term "autonormia" might describe the state of mind when someone unwittingly uses a sexist or racist expression, unaware of its implications—essentially living within an ideology. While "heteronormia" could be seen as a more apt term for external societal norms influencing an individual's thoughts and actions, "autonormia" **adds depth** to the discussion, suggesting there might be an even deeper level of unconscious norms at play.

Wittgenstein's concept of *"seeing as"* is relevant here, illustrating how perceptions and interpretations are shaped by internalized frameworks. This concept may represent the intersection of autonormia and heteronormia, highlighting the tension between internalized norms and external influences that shape the understanding of the world.

While not deeply familiar with internalized stimuli in nerve and motor sensory studies, the comparison between muscle memory and a state of autonormia shows parallels. For example, when prompted to breathe manually, ***one becomes conscious of the process, feeling each breath***—something normally unnoticed. Eventually, breathing slips back into an autonormic state, continuing automatically. This reflects the focus on the mental and cognitive aspects of the brain.

**All Other Lyrics Ignored**

The song *"I Have a Dream"* provides a compelling example of autonormia, where the content subtly critiques an ideology while the audience often overlooks these aspects. Björn Ulvaeus, an openly atheist lyricist, and Benny Andersson, suspected to be agnostic, wrote this song. Despite the apparent religious references, the song is not about Christianity but rather contains allusions to Greek mythology.

In Greek mythology, the dead were believed to cross the River Styx (or sometimes the River Acheron) to reach the underworld, with the ferryman Charon carrying souls across the river, provided they had a coin (obolus) for passage. This concept is one of the most famous examples of crossing a body of water after death. The song's lyrics reflect this existential theme, blending messages of hope, resilience, and belief as a means of coping:

I have a dream, a song to sing
To help me cope with anything
If you see the wonder of a fairy tale
***I believe in angels***

Something good in everything I see
When I know the time is right for me
I'll cross the stream, I have a dream
***I believe in angels***

I have a dream, a fantasy
To help me through reality
You can take the future even if you fail *(you can escape anytime you want)*
***I believe in angels***

The lyrics subtly suggest that belief serves as a coping mechanism, intertwined with existential struggle, and that this mechanism helps in all areas of life, which is essentially what religion is. This autonormic tendency, combined with cognitive inertia, becomes clear as listeners overlook these subtle messages, focusing instead on the lyric "I Believe in Angels." An atheist, however, would likely not enjoy listening to the song, let alone analyzing it. Once identified, these ideological disruptions appear more frequently, a phenomenon tied to the frequency illusion—an effect of selective autonormatic awareness.

The term "***Ancient***," originally denoting a time period from the start of written history to the Post-***Classical*** Period, is now commonly used as an adjective. Though once archaic slang, it remains in use today, coexisting as both a noun and adjective.

This is an example of an autonormic entity, which is self-defined and rarely questioned due to familiarity—like the '***Classical Period***,' a time in ancient Greece and Rome characterized by distinct social and political ***classes***.

"***Classical***" is often associated with music and art, rarely with ***class*** structures in society. The term evolved into a self-defined state, describing anything "***classic***." In English, "***classical***" and "***classic***" have distinct, non-interchangeable meanings. For instance, Mozart's ***Lacrimosa*** could be called a ***classic***, though Led Zeppelin would not be ***classified*** as ***classical***—at least not yet.

'***Classify***' shares the same origin. In English, which is highly morphological, nouns can become verbs by adding '***ize***' or '***ify***.' Speakers subconsciously learn this system, as seen with the word "***classify***." For example:

This system can *autoclassify* data into various *classes* but may *misclassify* or *overclassify* some entries, requiring *reclassification*, *subclassification*, or even *transclassification* after *preclassification*. Some data may remain *unclassifiable*, leading to *interclassification* or *underclassification*, though the *classifier* might eventually *disclassify* or *unclassify* items, depending on the *classifiable* attributes and required *classification* level.

Originally, "***classic***" referred to exemplary literature, art, and culture of the ***classical*** periods. Over time, it came to describe anything considered a definitive standard in various contexts. Its frequent use has obscured its origins, reinforcing its autonormic status.

This evolution is also seen in words like "***antique***," derived from the Latin "***antiquus***." First used in the 14th century to describe the antiquity period, it later emerged in the 16th century to describe any old object.

Historical examples show how terms evolve and detach from their original meanings. Phrases like "***acting like a barbarian***" or "***vandalizing***" once referred to specific groups, such as Barbarians and Vandals, but now describe behaviors or styles unrelated to their origins. ***Gothic***, once associated with a specific architectural style, later became slang for dark and mysterious, influenced by Romanticism.

"***Romantic***" originally referred to narrative literature written in ***Romantic*** languages, such as French, Spanish, and Italian, which derive from Latin. This use of "***Romantic***" did not refer to affection but to the languages spoken by the ***Romans***.

These examples illustrate how terms, filtered by familiarity, can obscure their deeper contexts.

The following pertains to cognitive inertia. Cognitive inertia is the resistance to change in beliefs or strategies despite new, valid information. Autonormia, by contrast, reflects the visibility of something cognitively rather than difficulty in adapting to new data.

## Understanding Cognitive Inertia

Cognitive inertia refers to the resistance to change and the refusal to accept new information that contradicts established beliefs. This phenomenon can be overcome through self-awareness. Another concept that overlaps with cognitive inertia is "autonormia," where habitual actions become automatic and unnoticed, much like how breathing becomes manual only when it is brought to attention but then returns to its autonomous state once forgotten.

**Example:** When attention is drawn to breathing, the action becomes manual, but it quickly falls back into an autonormic state. Unnoticed and unquestioned

When people dismiss information using avoidance tactics, it often indicates severe cognitive inertia. Some may claim they don't need counter-evidence or cite flawed systems to defend their stance, but this defies the principles of debate, which require the consideration of evidence. If someone truly believes their stance is indisputable, there should be no need to fear opposing views. Attempting to convince others with faulty tactics reveals an underlying fear that the contrary may hold truth.

**Why Fear Opposition?** There is no need to stifle conversations if one's mind is closed—others remain open. Is the feared idea dangerous? When did society start policing such discussions? For instance, consider the moon landing conspiracy. If the conspiracy is false, nothing changes; if true, it alters history. Silencing the conversation achieves nothing, while open dialogue encourages understanding as people test and research ideas.

## Recognizing Cognitive Inertia Online

*Galileo faced resistance to his heliocentric theory because of cognitive inertia. His contemporaries were deeply invested in the long-standing geocentric worldview and resisted his new ideas.*

Cognitive inertia occurs when new information contradicts established beliefs. This resistance progresses through several stages, the information that contradicts with you will be:

1. **laughable**
2. **mockable (w/ anger)**
3. **dismissible**

Reddit is one of the most toxic online environments due to its openness, which causes significant disruptions for certain users. Moderators should develop greater self-awareness. Initially, it seemed users were merely rude, but after years of mental analysis, similar patterns emerged regardless of the source. INTx groups, or those suspected to be INTx, were found to be the most inquisitive, advancing discussions, unlike mistyped INTx profiles that didn't align. Their inquisitive nature contributed both to resolving and expanding ideas, questions, and studies. However, cognitive inertia hindered progress. This is speculative, but I am confident that further research would support this. It was also found that users had a tendency to need to prove to others their views were correct with deceitful tactics.

**Indicators of Cognitive Inertia**

1. **When you laugh at new information** that conflicts with your current understanding, it becomes easier to dismiss. This can be difficult to recognize, as cognitive inertia may also activate for objectively true information. For instance, we know gravity is a law and thus far absolute, and we also know the Earth is flat—common knowledge. However, with more complex information, some may dismiss this as a typo or trolling because it doesn't align with their understanding.

2. Next comes anger in the form of mockery. After laughing—whether it's a smirk or an eye roll—at my claim that the Earth is flat and was common knowledge, you immediately felt anger.

3. From that anger and mockery, you'd find any reason to dismiss it, and promptly dismiss it. However, in this case, I agree the Earth is not flat, so you can comfortably rely on that agreement to dismiss the incorrect information you just encountered.

**Common Dismissal Tactics**

People often employ these tactics when confronted with new or contradictory information:

1. **Citing Dunning-Kruger:** This cognitive bias is frequently cited to discredit others, often with ironic self-application.

2. **Attacking Reputation:** Rather than addressing the argument, critics target the person behind it, making statements like:

    - "OP's profile history screams pseudoscience"
    - "Your post history shows you need help."
    - "You can't even spell 'Kruger' correctly."

3. **Complete Misunderstanding:** Critics may ridicule an argument without fully understanding it. For instance, someone might mock a linguistic explanation about the evolution of the name "Jehovah," not realizing the historical transformation from "Iove" to "Jove" due to linguistic changes.

**Sarcastic Agreement**: "Oh sure, and next, cats are alien spies."
**Mocking Complexity**: "Quite the galaxy-brain idea there!"
**Over-the-Top Praise**: "Groundbreaking! National Enquirer's next feature!"
**Ridiculing Sources**: "Sourced from a tinfoil-hat YouTuber, no doubt?"
**Redefining the Argument**: "So, we're living in a complete lie?"
**Blatant Dismissal**: "This isn't worth debunking."
**Downplaying Expertise**: "Your five minutes of Googling really paid off."
**Overgeneralization**: "With these ideas, no wonder we can't have nice things."
**Hyperbolic Comparison**: "As plausible as time-traveling dinosaurs building pyramids."
**Implying Naivety**: "Just learned this, couldn't wait to share?"
**Appeal to Common Sense**: "It's a miracle you can tie your shoes and believe this."
**Taking It to Extremes**: "Next, you'll confirm Atlantis exists."

**Exaggerating Misunderstanding**: “Next up: believing your toaster is sentient.”
**Feigning Concern**: “I’m worried about where your head’s at.”
**Playing the Fool**: “Ah, so vaccines are microchips?”
**Questioning Motives**: “Are you trolling or is this real belief?”
**Mock Sympathy**: “Keeping up with all these conspiracies must be exhausting.”
**Joking About Over-analysis**: “Can’t believe we all missed this crucial analysis.”
**Implying Groupthink**: “Perfect fit for r/conspiracy.”
**"Real Expert" Irony**: “As a PhD from YouTube University, I confirm this.”
**Feigning Enthusiasm**: “Please, continue. I need the entertainment.”
**Denigrating Argument Style**: “This is like throwing spaghetti to see what sticks.”
**Implying a Mental Leap**: “That’s a stretch even Mr. Fantastic would admire.”
**Mocking Outlandishness**: “Are you the modern Nostradamus?”
**Ridiculing Simplicity**: “Everything must be so simple in your world.”
**Patronizing Agreement**: “Absolutely! That’s exactly how it works.”
**Bringing Up Past Errors**: “Like when you thought microwaves give superpowers.”
**Appeal to Ridicule**: “Guess you believe in Bigfoot too?”
**Suggesting Delusion**: “Are these imaginations?”
**Faux Scientific Critique**: “Was this studied in a double-blind garage experiment?”
**Implying Cognitive Dissonance**: “How do you keep all those conflicting ideas straight?”
**Feigning Enlightenment**: “I’ve been in the dark all along—thank you!”
**Questioning Sanity**: “Does your therapist know about these theories?”
**Equating to Fiction**: “Is this from a new sci-fi series?”
**Playing the Contrarian**: “You probably think the moon landing was faked, right?”
**Mocking Expertise**: “Expecting a Nobel Prize for this discovery?”
**Comparing to Fringe Theories**: “Right up there with aliens building Stonehenge.”
**Incredulous Agreement**: “Why didn’t anyone else figure this out sooner?”
**Feigned Seriousness**: “As serious as advice from a fortune cookie.”
**Implying a Cult Mentality**: “Part of secret conspiracy teachings?”
**Appealing to Authority**: “Have you discussed this with a real scientist?”
**Referring to Conspiracies**: “Ties well with the Illuminati controlling everything.”
**Dismissing as Trendy**: “Picked this up from a viral TikTok challenge?”
**Feigning Shock**: “Are you serious right now?”
**Tired Dismissal**: “I’ve heard wild things, but this tops them all.”
**Joking About Future Predictions**: “What’s next? Robots taking over?”
**Subtle Insult**: “That’s...interesting. Do you often think this way?”
**Turning the Argument**: “By your logic, we might as well discard basic science.”
**Mocking Ambiguity**: “Oh, so everything’s a conspiracy, huh?”
**Mocking Conspiracy Theories**: “Let me guess, you’re also a fan of ancient alien theories?”
**Advanced:** for whatever reason, users which are on opposing sides of the argument will "claim" to be on your side, and then claim you are bat-shit insane. This is not normal behavior and can be categorized into a mental health category instead.

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